

21
A
SUPPLEMENT

T O

Britain's Mistakes

I N T H E

Commencement and Conduct

O F T H E

P R E S E N T W A R .

W H E R E I N

The late glorious Success of Admi-
ral *VERNON* at *Porto Bello*
is particularly considered.

B Y

A Merchant and Citizen of LONDON,

- L O N D O N :

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A
SUPPLEMENT
T O
Britain's Mistakes
IN THE
Commencement and Conduct
OF THE
PRESENT WAR.

A Man, who has no Regard for his Country but that which is founded upon what he possesses in it or gets from it, may view without Concern the *Inconveniencies* and *Dangers* it may be exposed to by *Mistakes* in Publick Conduct, provided those *Dangers* and *Inconveniencies* be such as cannot immediately affect him in his Person or Property ; but it is hardly possible for a Man who has a true, and what I may call a disinterested Regard for his Country, to look with Indifference at any *Danger* that may affect our latest Posterity, or the remotest Part of the *British* Dominions ; and therefore, if that *Danger* arises

from any *Mistake* in the Conduct of Publick Affairs, he will endeavour to remove the *Danger*, by shewing the *Mistake*; for the fatal Consequences of a *wrong* Step may often be avoided by an Alteration in our Conduct, and he that is once made *sensible* of his *Error* may justly be said to be in the high Road to *Amendment*.

With this View, and with this View only, I lately endeavoured to shew the *Mistakes* we had been guilty of in the *Commencement* and *Conduct* of the *present War*.——I did not find fault with *Men*;——I found fault with *Measures*;——and accordingly, I avoided, as much as possible, every thing that might look like a *Personal Reflection*. I know that *Men* are fallible,——even *Ministers* are fallible;——and therefore upon *Repentance* and *Amendment*, I shall always, for my own Share, be ready to forgive, as far as may be consistent with that Justice which is due to my Country.——I then put the *Mistakes* we had been guilty of in so clear a Light, that the only Answer I expected was an *Amendment*:——I am sure it would have been *the best*;——but instead thereof, I find some Arguments have been made use of, for justifying every Step of our *late Conduct*, and for shewing that it was impossible for us to do more, or otherwise than we have done.

When I talk of Arguments, I hope none of my Readers will suppose, I mean the little Quirks, Quibbles, and unfair Quotations, that have been made use of by the Polite Writers in the *Gazet-ter*; for however smoothly their Periods may be turned, however quaint their little Witticisms may be, I must declare, I never met with any thing like an Argument in any of those Papers. They are generally either all *Froth*, or so mon-
strously

strouſſy *ſtupid*, that it is impoſſible to keep one's Eyes open to the End of the *ſecond* Paragraph; but *Froth* it ſelf will be eagerly licked up by thoſe who are ſure of finding *Gold* at the Bottom; and the moſt *ſtupid* Dunce will be diligently liſt-
ned to by thoſe that expect to be well paid for their Attention.

The Arguments, I mean, are ſuch as have been made uſe of by Gentlemen, who have, perhaps, ſome Share in the *Miſtakes* we have committed; and as their making uſe of thoſe Arguments is a Proof of their not being yet *ſenſible* of their *Error*, the ſame Motives, that induced me to take Notice of their *Miſtakes*, render it neceſſary for me to give them a Reply; which I do with the more Alacrity, becauſe I am convinced their Ears are open to Reaſon, let it come from whom it will.

To Gentlemen, who are guided by their *Honour*, *Truth* is more *weighty* than *Gold*, and ſhines far *brighter* than *Silver*; but the Eyes of *mercenary* Tools are dazled at a *Shilling*, and a *Guinea* outweighs the cleareſt Demonſtration.——Such Men I ſhall not pretend to convince, *becauſe I have nothing to give*; but whatever Share ſome of them may have in *juſtifying*, I hope no one of them has any Share in *adviling* or *conducting* our Publick Meaſures; therefore I continue to write, and therefore, I hope, that what I write, may be of ſome Service to my Country; for if I thought that a ſelfiſh, mercenary, and knaviſh Spirit had got Poſſeſſion of thoſe that *advise* and *conduct*, as much as of thoſe that endeavour, by their Writings, to *juſtify*, I ſhould lay aſide my *Pen* as uſeleſs:——It would be high time to take up *another Weapon*.

After

After this short Introduction, I must observe, that in the *Pamphlet* which I lately published, I took Notice that in the Year 1733. the Reason given for our not engaging in the War then commenced by *France*, *Spain*, and *Sardinia*, against the *Emperor*, was, because it would have been of the most pernicious Consequence to our Trade, to have engaged in War whilst the *Dutch* remained at Peace. This is, I find, notwithstanding what I there said against it, still insisted on as a good Excuse for our Inactivity at that time; and therefore I shall now farther observe, that the *Dutch* were then, perhaps, a little infected with a groundless Jealousy of the *overgrown* Power of the *House of Austria*. We know it has been long a Maxim at several *Electoral* Courts of the *Empire*, rather to join with *France*, than allow the *House of Austria* to get too large an Accession of Power: we know that this Maxim has, more than once, brought the *Empire* almost to the Brink of Destruction; and the *Dutch* were, perhaps, at that time a little too much under the Influence of this *Electoral Jealousy*; but surely this was a Maxim that never could have any Weight at the Court of *Great Britain*; tho' it must be confessed, that our Treaty of *Hanover*, and our Politics about that time, seemed in some Measure to be founded upon some such Maxim as this.

Another Reason for the *Dutch* not joining with the *Emperor* was, perhaps, the Resentment they still nourished in their Bosom against the *Emperor*, on Account of the *East-India* Company he had set up at *Ostend*; but we could have no Resentment against him on that Account, because we could not so much as alledge it was contrary to any Treaty he had made with us; and considering

ing that the *French* were then setting up an *East-India* Trade, I cannot think it was our Business to destroy the *Ostend Company*, because it would have done more Harm to their *East-India* Trade than to ours. The best Thing we could have done to have crushed the *East-India* Trade both in *France* and *Flanders*, would have been, to have thrown our *East-India* Trade open, and supported our Settlements in those Parts, as in *Africa*, at the *Publick Expence*; because, in that Case, we should have brought the *Profits* to be made by the Trade so low, that no new Company could have supported themselves, or thought it worth while to carry it on.

These were Reasons that might, perhaps, at that time, prevent the *Dutch* joining with the *Emperor*, which did not at all affect us; and we had strong Reasons for joining the *Emperor* in that War, which did not at all, or very little, affect the *Dutch*. I mean the Pretensions that had been set up, and the Incroachments that had been made by *Spain* in *America*. *Spain* had made no Incroachments upon the *Dutch*; she had cutted them of none of their Rights or Possessions; nor was there any Dispute between *Spain* and them about Limits. And the Pretension lately set up by *Spain*, of searching all Ships in the *American* Seas, and seizing those Ships in which they find any Goods they are pleased to call *contraband*, could but very little affect the *Dutch*; because they have little or no Trade in those Seas, except a *contraband* Trade carried on from *Curassoa* and *Surinam* with the *Spanish* Settlements in *America*; and their Ships employed in this Trade, as they cannot be reclaimed by their Government, are therefore provided for defending themselves against *Spanish Guarda Costa's*. But we, on the other hand, have

have a great, an open, and a fair Trade in the *American* Seas, and therefore we could not submit to the Pretension the *Spaniards* had set up: We had before then born with it too long.—And besides, they had made great *Incroachments* upon us: They had even stript us of some of our *Rights* and *Possessions*; and they had raised *most groundless Disputes* with us about *Limits*;—therefore, let the *Dutch* do what they would, let the Consequence to our Trade be what it would, we ought to have joined in that War, not only to save an *ancient* and *useful Ally*, but also to embrace that *Opportunity* of forcing *Spain* to do us Justice, which, we might then have foreseen, we could never expect by *fair Means*, and without which *our Trade could not subsist*; and we had then some Complaints against *France*, which they are rendering every day *more heavy*, and for which likewise, I believe, we shall never be able to obtain Redress or Satisfaction *in a peaceable manner*.

The different Circumstances therefore, that the *Dutch* and *we* were under at that time, afforded a most unanswerable Argument for our not allowing our selves to be any way directed by the Measures *they* might take; and the Danger which the Balance of Power was then in ought to have been a prevailing Argument with both of us to have joined the *Emperor*. Suppose the *Dutch* were blind to their own Interest:—Suppose the Eyes of some of *their leading Men* were blinded by the *Gold Dust* of *France*; could that be an Argument for our shutting our Eyes because they shut theirs?—Or did the *Gold Dust* of *France* fly over both Countries?—I am sorry, I cannot say the Thing is impossible. —I remember, it was said in a *Pamphlet* published this Winter against the *Place Bill*, that

in King *William's* time our Parliaments, or at least that Party in Parliament which appeared against the Court, was under the Influence of *French Gold*; from whence the Author wisely and modestly concluded, that if our Parliaments are not corrupted by *our own* Ministers, they will be corrupted by the *French* *. This I think impossible : ——— They may be corrupted by *our own* Ministers, but I do not think they can be corrupted immediately by the *French*; considering the natural Aversion our People bear to *France*, and the Impracticability of spreading *French Gold* among our Electors. ——— The very Face of *Louis le Grand* upon a *French Pistole* would have made an *English Elector* spurn the Bribe, tho' he would perhaps have been ready to have accepted of half the Sum in *English Guineas*. ——— But I do not think it at all impossible, that an *English Prime Minister*, when we have the Misfortune to have such a noxious Animal amongst us, may be under the Influence of *French Gold*; and if *that Minister* has, by means of *English Posts and Pensions*, the Direction of a Majority in *both Houses of Parliament*, our *Parliament* as well as *Ministry* may then, to the Misfortune of the Nation, be said to be under the Influence of *French Gold*. I am far from saying that there was a Suspicion of this being our Case at the Commencement of the late War between *France* and the *Emperor*; but there was certainly a great deal of Money remitted about that Time from *France* to *England*; for in the Months of *October, November, and December 1733*, the Exchange between *Paris* and *London*, to the Surprize of many Merchants upon Change, fell to 30 Pence *English* for

* See an Impartial Enquiry into the Reasonableness and Necessity of a Bill, &c.

the *French Crown*, which was near *seven per Cent.* more in our Favour, or rather less to our Disadvantage, than it usually is.

As those Arguments that are drawn from *the Encouragement of our Trade, or the Dangers it may be exposed to*, are always of *great Weight*, tho' not always *well founded*, I thought it necessary to take a little farther Notice of this Argument, which has been so strongly insisted on, for justifying our Conduct in the Year 1733; and from what I have now added, I hope it will fully appear, that the *Danger* our Trade might have been exposed to, by our engaging in War whilst the *Dutch remained at Peace*, was no sufficient Reason for our not assisting the *Emperor at that time*, and taking hold of *that Opportunity*, which was certainly a *better one* than we have at present, for settling all our Differences with *Spain*. Peace is certainly better than War, especially to a *trading Nation*; but our present Circumstances shew, that War sometimes becomes *necessary for the Support of Trade*, and therefore the *Wisdom of a Nation* does not so much consist in *preserving Peace*, as in *choosing the proper Opportunity for engaging in War*; for if a Nation lets slip a *favourable Opportunity*, it may probably be forced into a War at a very *unfavourable Juncture*. Whether this is our Case, I shall leave the World to judge, and proceed to take notice of the most material Arguments I have heard insisted on, for justifying our Conduct since the *Commencement* of the War, which we are now *single and alone*, engaged in, and like to continue so for some Years, unless we pursue it *with Vigour*, or submit to a *dishonourable and pernicious Peace*.

Notwithstanding what I have said, I find it still insisted on, that if we attempt to take and hold any Part of the *Spanish Dominions in America*, both the
Emperor

Emperor and the *Dutch* will join with *France* and *Spain* against us; and, in order to give Weight to this Argument, the *Daily Advertiser* (who gives us from time to time Articles of News and absurd Speculations, without any Regard to Truth or Reason, and in order only to justify some ministerial Measure, or ridiculous Argument in Politicks) has been, I suppose, instructed to extol highly our demolishing the Forts of *Porto Bello*, instead of keeping Possession of the Place*; and to intimate, that it is pretended by the Court of *France*, that the Riches which come from *Spanish America* is the common Treasure of all the *European* Nations, of which the King of *Spain* is, and has always been the *Guardian*; and that therefore it is the common Interest of *Europe* to prevent the *Spaniards* from being drove out of the Possession of any Part of these Dominions†. But altho' this deep Politician gives an artful foreign Tang to his home-made News, I can give but little Credit to any of them, and much less to this Article than any of the rest; for whatever he and his *French* Friends may pretend, and notwithstanding the great Authority the Court of *France* has, by our Assistance, gained at the Courts of *Vienna* and the *Hague*, I cannot think that either of these Courts will be so blind to their own Interest, as to join in a War for preventing our taking such Measures as are necessary for putting an effectual Stop to the Indignities, the Insults, the Depredations, and the Cruelties, which we have lately suffered from *Spain*; and that we cannot put an effectual Stop to them, unless we secure our Trade in the *American* Seas, by taking and holding some of the Dominions in that Part of the World, which

* See *Daily Advertiser*, March 28.

† See *Daily Advertiser*, March 31.

are now in the Possession of *Spain*, is what every Court in *Europe*, I am sure I need not except our own, must be fully convinced of. Therefore I cannot think there is any Truth in this Argument; but if there were, I am sure it ought to be a prevailing Argument for enquiring into the Conduct of those, who have brought the Affairs of *Europe* into a Situation so unfortunate for this Kingdom.

Another Argument against our making any Conquests in *America* is, That it would be of pernicious Consequence to this Nation, to have Possession of the *Spanish Mines in America*. — We are told, that whilst these Mines continue in the Possession of the *Spaniards*, we shall always be able to draw from them most of the *Gold and Silver* they dig for, in exchange for the Manufactures we send them; which not only brings a great Deal of Riches into the Nation yearly, but supports a great Number of laborious People, and preserves a Spirit of Industry amongst us. Whereas, if we were in Possession of those Mines, *Spain* would take none of our Manufactures, because they could have nothing to give us in Exchange; and our being able to come at Riches at so easy a Rate, would destroy that Spirit of Industry which now prevails amongst the Generality of our People. — From this way of reasoning one would think that the Industry of a Nation depended upon its being poor, whereas it is certain, that it depends upon the Frame of the Government, and the Education of the People. In a Country where the People are, from their Infancy, taught to despise Trade and Industry: Where they are taught that a Gentleman ought to starve rather than be a Bourgeois, Merchant, or Mechanick, one cannot wonder at seeing a Spirit of Pride, Poverty, and Idleness, prevail among the People. Or in a Country where no poor Man can be secure of possessing, and
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transmitting to his Posterity, what he acquires by his *Industry* and *Frugality*, no Man can expect to see either *Industry* or *Frugality* prevail. But in a Country where *Liberty* and *Property* are secure, and where *Merchants*, *Farmers*, and *Tradesmen*, meet with the Regard they deserve, and I am sure they deserve the greatest Regard, especially if Care be taken to instill into them a *Spirit of Courage* as well as *Industry*, we may be assured that a *Spirit of Trade and Industry* will prevail, let the Country be never so rich in Mines of *Gold* and *Silver*; for those Mines will always be appropriated to the Publick, or to the Rich, and the Produce of them will be as hard to be come at by the Poor, as if they were in another Country. If *Gold* and *Silver Mines* were as plenty in *England* as *Coal Mines* are, a Poor Man could no more come at the *Gold* or *Silver* he had occasion for, than he can now come at the *Coals* he has occasion for. He could come at neither, unless he had something to give in exchange; and that he could no other Way have but by *Industry*, and *Frugality*. Therefore our being in Possession of the *Mines of Peru*, would be so far from discouraging *Industry* among our People, that it would encourage it; because the Produce of those Mines would then be wholly laid out among our own *Tradesmen* and *Manufacturers*, whereas a great Part of it is now laid out among the *French* and *Dutch*; so that if our Exports to *Spain* should decrease, as they certainly would, our Exports to *America* would increase in a much greater Proportion.

Tho' I have shewn the Ridiculousness of this Argument, yet I am far from saying, that we ought now to attempt conquering and holding all the *Spanish* Settlements in *America*. I know the Circumstances of Affairs in *Europe* are far from being favourable for such a Design at present. But there is
a great

a great Difference between our taking *all* their Settlements from them, and taking *such only* as are *necessary* for *securing* the *Freedom* of our Trade and Navigation in the *American* Seas. And I must upon this Occasion observe, that if we had joined in the War in 1733, and had been successful in that War, as we probably should if it had been well conducted, there was no Power in *Europe* that would and could have limited our Views in *this Respect*.

The same Gentlemen say farther, That supposing it were our Interest to take the *Spanish* Settlements in *America* from them, and supposing the other Powers of *Europe* should give us leave to do so, yet the Climate in *America* is so inconvenient and unhealthy for Men bred in *Great Britain*, that we could not keep an Army there sufficient for conquering those Settlements, and for keeping them in Subjection after we have conquered them. In Answer to which I shall indeed grant, that it would be dangerous to keep an Army, or even Seamen, penn'd up in Ships in any Part of the *West-Indies*, or upon the Coasts of any Part of *America*. Our Expedition to the *Bastimento's* in 1727 must convince us of this; and the present Condition of our Fleet in the *Mediterranean* shews, how dangerous it is to keep Men, for many Months, lingering on board Ships without any Exercise, or any Undertaking that may serve to exhilarate their Spirits, and preserve that Alacrity which is so necessary for the Health of the Body. But it is allowed, that *Cuba* is a healthful and fertile Island. The Country about *Mexico* is, I am told, one of the pleasantest in the World. *Panama* is a delightful Place; and the whole *Carraca* Coast from *Cartagena* to *Surinam* is a moderate Climate and a fertile Soil; in all which Places Armies might be

be safely kept, and easily maintained, if the Country were inhabited by an industrious People. The *Spanish* Inhabitants, it is true, are so lazy, that few of them either plough or sow ; and therefore when they have not a free Intercourse with their Neighbours, they soon come to be in great Want of Provisions. But if we were in Possession of any of those Places, we could in a few Years make them support the Troops necessary for conquering the rest ; and in the mean Time those Troops could be easily supplied from *Britain*, or from our *Northern Colonies*. And as for preserving our Conquests, I believe we should soon stand in need of no great Army ; for if we took Care to lay our Governors under proper Restrictions, the Inhabitants would find such a Difference between the *Easy Dominion* of *Britain* and the *heavy Yoke* of *Spain*, that they would never desire to bring themselves again under the latter.

Thus, I think, I have answered the chief Objections that have been made against our attempting to make such Conquests as are *necessary* for securing our *Trade and Navigation* in the *American Seas*. But then it has been said, that though we may and ought to make such Conquests, it was impossible for us to attempt it so soon as I say we ought to have done ; because of the great Number of *Transports* that would have been necessary for *transporting* such a Number of Troops. This Objection, I know, carries the more Weight, because of the great Number of *Transports* King *William* had, for bringing that Army to *Britain*, by Means of which he so happily brought about the late glorious Revolution. But Gentlemen should consider, that he brought over a great Number of *Horse* and *Dragoons* ; and surely no Man supposes that we ought to send *Horse* or *Dragoons* to the *West-Indies*.

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We ought to send nothing but *Infantry*: We ought not so much as send any *Horses* for the Use of our Officers; and an Army of Foot would require no great Number of *Ships* for transporting them, even to the *West-Indies*. The 12000 Men I proposed to have been sent, would have required but 24000 *Ton of Shipping*. That is to say, 80 or 90 Ships of about 300 *Tons* each, would have been sufficient for transporting the whole Number of Troops I proposed; and surely we may always, in two or three Months Time, find that Number in the several Ports of *Great Britain*, especially when there is an *Embargo* laid upon our Trade, which was the Case last Summer.

These are the chief Arguments that have been made use of, for justifying what I have called *Mistakes* in our past Conduct; but that which has given the Friends of our great and wise Minister the greatest Cause to triumph over what I have said, is the late glorious Success of *Admiral Vernon* at *Porto Bello*. In the Pamphlet I have published I make use of these Words. — ‘ And as to our
 ‘ Exploits at Land in *America*, I must confess, I
 ‘ expect to hear no better Account of them. — We
 ‘ have sent, ’tis true, an Admiral, with an additional Number of Ships, to that Part of the
 ‘ World; but we have sent no regular Troops,
 ‘ nor any Sort of Force proper for a vigorous and
 ‘ successful Descent. Therefore, *barring a few*
 ‘ insignificant Incursions, I expect to hear of nothing
 ‘ but another *Bastimento’s Expedition*, &c.’ —
 This these Gentlemen triumph over, as if the Event had shewn that I was quite mistaken in my Expectations; but, I believe, I shall find it no difficult Matter to put an End to these Triumphs by shewing, — That whatever Glory the Nation thereby acquired, their Patron can claim no Share of it,

it ; That the very Attempt, and much less the Success, was not to be expected, nor could well be hoped for, by any Man who judged from the Reason of Things ; That this Attempt, glorious and successful as it was, can from the Consequences be reckoned nothing but an *insignificant Incurfion*, and That this Success might have been attended with most considerable Consequences, had that *brave Admiral* been provided with but *a few Landforces* and *Bombketches*, and some Measures taken which were in our Power, and which were advised by some of our Merchants last Summer.

As to the Share their Patron may claim in the Glory of this Expedition, it is now, I believe, pretty generally known, that he neither advised employing that Gentleman, nor did he advise giving him any Orders to attack *Porto Bello*. Mr. *Vernon* had the Honour to be a Member of last Parliament, and while he was so, he acquired *still a greater Honour* by opposing *some Schemes* then attempted, and many Things that were *approved of by the Majority*. What was the Reason I shall not pretend to answer, but he was disappointed in his Preferment, *without any Reason assigned*. Some *younger Captains* were made *Admirals*, whilst he remained a *Captain upon half Pay*. When War, or at least some Sort of warlike Measures against *Spain* were resolved on, an honourable Gentleman now at the Head of the Admiralty, who knew, that however *unfit* Mr. *Vernon* was for being an *Admiral in Time of Peace*, he was *very fit* for being an *Admiral in Time of War*, insisted upon his being restored to his Rank in the Navy, because he knew, he would not otherwise accept of any Employment. This, I am well assured, was objected to by a certain Minister : However, the honourable Gentleman insisted upon what he had proposed,

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and when that Minister was gone to his Country Seat *Captain Vernon* was at once and *per Saltum* promoted to the Rank of *Vice Admiral*.

Now, with Regard to the *Orders* or *Instructions* given or sent to *Admiral Vernon*, whatever private Orders he might have had for attacking and destroying the Forts at *Porto Bello* I cannot pretend to say, but if he had any such, I must think it was a little odd, not to provide him with those Things that were necessary for making the Success of the Attempt at least probable; for it was certainly very improbable without some *Land Forces*, and I shall presently shew, that it was extremely dangerous to trust to his being provided with such from *Jamaica*. Therefore, I must in Charity suppose, that he had no such Orders. I must suppose that he had nothing but general Orders for *Reprisals*; and these he looked on as sufficient for warranting an Attack upon *Porto Bello*, since he found the *Governor of Jamaica* willing to run the Risk of furnishing him with *Land Forces* for that Purpose. He had a Mind to retrieve, if possible, the Honour of his Country; and therefore he resolved to interpret his Orders in the most extensive Sense they could bear: In a Sense which, perhaps, no Admiral in *England* but himself would have put upon them: In a Sense which the *Spaniards* did not imagine would be put upon them; and in a Sense which, I am convinced, some People did not intend should be put upon them.

From hence, I think, it is plain, that these Gentlemen, without the most consummate Assurance, can ascribe to themselves or their Patron no Share of the Glory the Nation has acquired by *Admiral Vernon's* Success; and from the Reason of Things no Man in the Kingdom, much less They, could expect he would have made such an Attempt.

———— In a War with *Spain* our Island of *Jamaica* lyes more exposed than any other Part of our Dominions. ——— The large *Spanish* Island of *Cuba* lyes within a few Hours Sail of it. ———

From *Cuba* to *Jamaica* an Army might pass over in Bouts and flat-bottom'd Vessels in a Night's Time. ——— There are *twice* the Number of Inhabitants in *Cuba* that there are in *Jamaica*. ———

In *Cuba* the *Spaniards* had *last Summer* at least 3000, they call them 5000, *Regular Troops*; and they had *three* or *four* Men of War at the *Havana*, which is the chief Port of that Island. ———

In *Jamaica* we had *last Summer* but *eight Independent Companies* of 100 Men each, if complete; but I believe they were not then, nor are yet, near complete; and I must think it a little strange, that Orders were not given, as soon as we saw that a War was unavoidable, to send over a sufficient Number of Recruits for compleating these Companies at least. ——— In these Circumstances could any Man expect, that the Governor of *Jamaica* would send a Man off of the Island to assist in any Expedition? Yet that brave Man knowing the Courage of the Inhabitants and the Indolence and Cowardice of his Enemies, and finding that, without his Assistance, his Country would be reduced to the Misfortune of losing an Opportunity to revenge itself on its Enemies, resolved to run the Risk of furnishing the Admiral with the few Land Forces he desired.

Thank God! The *Spaniards* from *Cuba* did not take the Opportunity of invading *Jamaica*; but when I reflect on the dangerous Situation the Island was in, after Admiral *Vernon* left it, and in which it continued during the whole Time of his Absence, I must ascribe the Safety of that Island more to the Protection of Providence than to the Wisdom of our Measures. There were but two twenty Gun Ships

left to defend the *Island*, which, considering that the *Spaniards* had *three or four* Line of Battle Ships well manned at the *Havana*, were not sufficient to guard the *Island* against an open *Invasion*, and much less were they sufficient to guard it against an *Invasion by Surprise*; and the *Regular Forces* left upon the *Island* did not then amount to near 300, to defend it against 3000 of the like *Forces* that might have been sent from the *Havana*; so that the few *white Inhabitants* that are in *Jamaica* had nothing but their own *Courage* and the *Favour of Providence* to depend on for protecting them against an *Enemy* that might have invaded them with twice their *Number*.—— These Remarks I do not make with any *Design* to reflect either upon *Admiral Vernon's Expedition*, or upon the *Governor of Jamaica's* furnishing him with *Land Forces*.—— No, the *Resolution* was brave, it was wise, it was necessary, both in the one and the other; but what shall I say of those who rendered it necessary for them to expose the *Island of Jamaica* to such *Danger*, when it might have been so easily prevented?

This may shew that no *Man* in his *Senses* could expect, that *Admiral Vernon* should be furnished with any *Land Forces* from *Jamaica*; and his taking such *Forces* along with him is an evident *Proof* of their being necessary; for it will, I believe, be allowed, that he would not have desired them, if he had not thought they were absolutely necessary. But with the *Land Forces* he had, no *Man* here at home could reasonably expect he should make such an *Attempt*. I am sure some of those, who now endeavour to share with him in the *Glory* of the *Expedition*, could not expect he should have attempted it; because, in a famous *Debate* in last *Parliament*, they insisted upon it, that it was impossible
for

for Admiral Hosier with the numerous Squadron under his Command, which in the Year 1727 lay so many Months for a Shew at the *Bastimento's*, to the Destruction of 3 Admirals, 14 Captains, above 40 Lieutenants, and between three and four thousand Seamen ; I say they insisted upon it, that it was impossible for Admiral Hosier to make any Attempt upon *Porto Bello* or upon the *Galleons* that were then in that Port. It is true, Mr. Vernon then said, that he could have taken *Porto Bello* with any six of the Men of War belonging to that Squadron ; and he has now made good what he said, for he had but six Ships only, and of these there were properly but three engaged in the Action. Perhaps he may now, from those Gentlemen, meet with as little Thanks for doing so, as he then did for saying so. Admiral Vernon certainly expected Success when he went upon this Expedition ; because he knew how ill they were provided at *Porto Bello* for a Defense, he knew the Cowardice of the Enemy he had to deal with ; and the Event has shewn he judged right. But no Man here at home could expect, the Spaniards would be so ill provided at a Place of such Consequence, or that they would have behaved in such a monstrous cowardly Manner ; and therefore, if I had said without Exception, that I expected to hear no good Account of our Exploits at Land in America, I might easily have justified myself.

Our late glorious Success at that Place, cannot for this Reason be brought as an Objection to any Thing I said, and much less will it appear to be so, when it is considered, that I expressly excepted a few insignificant Incurfions ; for this of *Porto Bello* can be called nothing but an Incurfion, and is far from being so significant as some People imagine. I must do Justice to our brave Admiral in saying, that he made it as significant as it was in his Power
to

to do: He did all that could be done for the Honour and Service of his Country; he did more than any Man could have expected, and more than *some People* desired. Yet still it is properly to be called *but an Incurfion*; and the *Spaniards* may, during the War, make the same Use of the Forts they have *still remaining* at the Mouth of the River *Chagra*, they formerly made of the Forts they had at *Porto Bello*. They brought their Treasure, it is true, upon *Mules* from *Panama*, all the Way over Land, to *Porto Bello*, which they thought more safe than fending it by Water; but by Means of this River, they have Water Carriage from the North Seas of *America* to within 8 *Spanish Leagues* of *Panama*; and as the Mouth of this River lyes but a few Leagues to the North West of *Porto Bello*, they therefore brought all their Goods from *Panama* down this River, and from the Mouth of it they brought the Goods in a sort of Lighters by Sea to *Porto Bello*; and by the same Method, they carried all the *European* Goods bought at the Fair of *Porto Bello* to *Panama*.

From hence we may see, that the Destruction of the Forts at *Porto Bello* will not distress the *Spaniards* so much as some imagine, nor will it open such a Trade as we are by some made to believe; because *Porto Bello* itself is but a poor Place, and the *Spaniards*, by means of the Forts they have at the Mouth of the *Chagra*, may prevent any Goods being carried thither from, or from thence to *Porto Bello*. But whatever Trade may be opened by our destroying the Forts at *Porto Bello*, it is an Advantage that both the *French* and the *Dutch* will share with us, especially the latter, who have always great Magazines of Goods proper for a private Trade with the *Spaniards* at their Island of *Curaffoa*; and accordingly, I hear, they went to *Porto Bello*, as soon as they were informed we had laid

laid the Port open, and brought away from thence above 80000 *Pieces of Eight*, which is more than we may probably ever bring from thence, because the *Spaniards*, as soon as they recover from the Fright we put them in, will certainly take as much care as they can, to prevent any Treasure or valuable Effects being brought to *that Place* from any other Part of their Dominions.

These Considerations must shew, that our Attack upon *Porto Bello*, brave, glorious, and successful as it was, may in some Measure be justly called *but an insignificant Incurſion*; but the little Resistance we met with at that Place, must at the same time shew, what a Progress we might, *by this time*, have made in *America*, had such a Number of *Land Forces* been sent out last September, as I have proposed. We might, *by this time*, have been in full Possession of *Mexico* as well as the *Isthmus of Darien*; and in that Case, *Cuba* and all the *Spanish Islands* must have fallen of themselves; for without a Communication with *Europe* or *Mexico*, they could not have subsisted for any time. — Nay, if but *two or three thousand Land Forces* with a couple of *Bomb Vessels*, had been sent to the *West-Indies* soon after *Admiral Vernon* sailed from *England*; and if, *at the same time*, *two or three Men of War* had been sent to the *South Seas*, and ordered to make the best of their way to the Bay of *Panama*, in order to block up that Port, which was an Advice given by *some Gentlemen in the City*, who have the Honour and Interest of their Country more at Heart, than they have that of fishing for Posts and Pensions either for themselves or their Friends; I say, had these Things been done, our Success at *Porto Bello* would have been *more probable* than it was, and would have been attended with the most considerable Consequences.

Admiral

Admiral *Vernon* might then, and certainly would, instead of destroying the Forts at *Porto Bello*, have kept Possession of them; and would have set People to work to fortify the Town by Land as fast as possible. At the same time he might have taken Possession of the Forts at the Mouth of the River *Cbagra*, which he could not do without Bomb Vessels; and then he might easily have marched over that narrow *Isthmus* between *Porto Bello* and *Panama*, which is not above thirty Leagues over, and might have not only taken but kept Possession of *Panama*. At this last Place, there was then seven Millions of Pieces of Eight in Gold and Silver, besides a great Value of Goods which had been brought from *Peru* for the Fair at *Porto Bello*; all which he would have got Possession of by means of the Port's being block'd up by our Men of War; which otherwise he could not, because they had Ships lying in the Harbour of *Panama*, ready to carry all their Treasure and valuable Effects to *Lima*, in case we should attempt to march over the *Isthmus* from *Porto Bello* to *Panama*, as we had before done during our Wars with *Spain*.

By this means, we should have got Possession of at least two Millions Sterling of Spanish Treasure and Effects, which would have been of some Service in the Prosecution of the War, and might have eased our People of the heavy Taxes they must now pay for that necessary Purpose. Moreover, we should, by this Means, have opened a Trade, not only with *Porto Bello* and *Panama*, but with the whole Western Coast of America from the Northernmost Parts of Mexico to the Southernmost Parts of *Peru* and *Cbili*, where the Spaniards have no *Guarda Costa's*, nor any other effectual Means for preventing their People from trading with

with us ; and this Advantage would have been the more considerable, because, by keeping Possession of *Porto Bello*, we should have prevented any other Nation's interfering with us in this rich and beneficial Trade.

But the greatest and most considerable Consequence this Success would have been attended with was, that it would have put an effectual and almost an entire Stop to *Spain's* receiving any Supplies of Treasure from *Peru*; and as Money is the Sinews of War, we should have put it out of the Power of the *Spaniards* to have continued the War, because, *without that Supply*, it would have been impossible for them to support but for a few Years, the Fleets and Armies they have now in *their Pay*. Whereas, by prosecuting the War in this manner, *we on the other hand* should have been enabled to augment considerably both our Fleets and Armies, without burthening our People with *any new or additional Taxes*.

These would have been the Consequences of Admiral *Vernon's* having been, *in due time*, furnished, as he might easily have been, with what was necessary for enabling him to go about that which the Event has shewn, he had *Courage* to undertake, and *Conduct* to execute in that manner which might *most probably* have been attended with Success. This convinces me, that when he failed for the *West-Indies*, we had nothing farther in View, than to make what *Reprisals* we could at *Sea*, without attempting any thing at *Land*; and his finding the *Spaniards* so ill provided for his Reception at *Porto Bello* may, I think, to every Man be a full Conviction, that this was, *at that time*, our only aim ; for from a Fact which is now publick and certainly known, it would seem, that

the Court of Spain was apprized of our Intention to make *Reprisals* upon them *at sea*, long before it was known in *this Island*; and if they were apprized of our Intention to make *Reprisals* upon them *at Sea*, I can see no Reason why they might not, by the same Channel, whatever it was, have been apprized of our Intention to make an Attack upon them *at Land*, in case we had *at that time* had any such.

By Accounts from *Jamaica*, we have lately heard, that on the 2d of *August* last, the *Jane*, *Andrew Stewart* Master, bound from *Jamaica* to *Curassoa*, was taken in the Latitude of 14. 15 min. by a *Spanish Man of War* of 52 Guns and 400 Men, bound from *Cadiz* to *St. Domingo* or *Hispaniola*, and commanded by *Don Joseph Antonio de Houra*, who used his Prisoners, according to custom, in a most barbarous manner; and after having stript them of every thing, set them a-shore at *Ocoa*, an uninhabited Part of *Hispaniola*, from whence, after sustaining great Hardships, and surmounting many Dangers and Difficulties, they got at last to *Jamaica*, where the Master and some of the Crew made *Affidavits* of what had happened.

This, I must confess, surpris'd me not a little, when I first heard it, for as this Ship was taken at a great distance from any *Spanish Coast*, as she was seized without the least Pretence of illicit Trade, and as she was seized by a *Spanish Man of War* and not a *Guarda Costa*, and the Men put on shore even before the Ship was carried into any Port to be condemned, I look'd upon it as an Act of downright Hostility, therefore I concluded, the *Spanish Captain* was furnished with Orders for committing Hostilities upon us before he left *Cadiz*, which Orders the *Court of Spain* would not certainly have given

given him, unless they had been apprised of our Intentions against them; and as *this Man of War* sailed from *Cadiz* about the *Middle*, or towards the *End of June*, I from thence presumed, that the *Court of Spain* knew of our Intention to make *Reprisals* long before it was publick either in *Europe* or *America*. For this Reason, if they were apprised of our Intentions to make *Reprisals at Sea*, as it would seem they were, I must presume they would have been apprised of our Intention to make an *Attack* upon them at *Land*, if we had really intended any such thing; and as it seems by their being so ill provided at *Porto Bello*, that they were not apprised of our having *such a Design*, I can hardly believe we had *any such* when *Admiral Vernon* sailed for the *West-Indies*.

What the Event of this War may be, God only knows, but I must own that my Prospect of it grows every Day more dismal. What Necessity is there for *Admiral Haddock's* cruising with a strong Squadron about the *Island of Minorca*. A few *Guard Ships*, no greater Number than what I proposed to have been stationed in the *Mediterranean*, would have prevented any Attempt the *Spaniards* could have made upon *that Island*. — They have no *Squadron of Men of War* in that Sea. — They can make no Attempt upon *that Island*, but by sending thither at once an Army sufficient for conquering the Place; and without a Squadron to protect their *Transports*, a few *Cruisers* might have been able to disperse their Fleet designed for that Purpose, and to sink a great Number of their *Transports*. — Their Menaces against *that Island*, I therefore look on as nothing but a Feint for covering some other Design; and for this Reason, I must think, that our

Alarum of an Invasion upon *Minorca* is much of the same Nature with our Alarum of an *Invasion at Home*. We frighten ourselves with what is not probable, whilst at the same time we neglect, I am afraid; that which may probably happen; and if the *Spanish* Fleet be sailed both from *Cadiz* and *Ferrol*, with *Land Forces* on board, which we are told they are, I tremble for our *Sugar Islands* both to the *Leeward* and *Windward*; for unless our *Squadron at Gibraltar* sailed immediately after them, and was sufficient for encountering them at Sea, most of our *Sugar Islands*, especially our *Leeward Islands*, may be destroyed, before *Admiral Vernon* can come to their Assistance, considering that he must *work up* to them against both *Winds* and *Currents*. Nay, I do not know but that brave Man himself may *run a Risk* of being destroyed, in case they should come upon him *at unawares*, and when his Squadron is in *small Divisions*, and those Divisions at a *great Distance* from one another; and this I am the more afraid of, because I hear, there are *at least three* of his Ships rendered unfit for Service, for want of a *sufficient Supply* of Masts and other Naval Stores. But this, I hope, is no *Mistake* in our *Conduct*. — I hope, it is a *Mistake* in our *last Accounts* from the *West-Indies*.

It was certainly right to have a *strong Squadron* about *Gibraltar*; but *that Squadron* should not, to the Destruction of the Health of the Seamen, have been kept in a sort of *Inaction*. They should have been continually sailing from Place to Place, upon the Coasts of *Spain*, and making *Incurfions* wherever they could annoy the Enemy or get any Booty. — What signified blocking up their Fleets or their Squadrons, unless we could propose, by
some

some Means or other, to set them all on fire in their Harbours?——If we found we could not do this, the best way was to let them sail out if they durst; because by keeping a good look out, or by having good Intelligence, which, I hope, we have, considering the Sums we pay for secret Service, our Squadron might have followed them, and might have had a Chance of doing that at Sea, which could not be done whilst they remained in their Harbours.——If our Squadron had been stationed chiefly at *Gibraltar*: If that had been made the principal Place of Rendezvous; our Squadron might have been every day employed in sending out Ships to make *Incurfions* upon the *Spanish* Coast:——It would have been in a middle Way to succour *Port Mahon*, or to pursue the *Spanish* Fleet or Squadron; and the Cruisers I proposed to have been stationed upon the Coast of *Spain*, would always have been able to have brought seasonable Intelligence.

But suppose it may be said, that, without *Land Forces*, we could make no *Incurfions* upon the Coasts of *Spain*, what could hinder us from raising and sending five or six thousand *Land Forces* to *Minorca*, or a greater Number if it had been thought necessary?——Has the Parliament refused any Expence for carrying on this just and necessary War?——Have the People shewn the least Discontent?——The *Island of Minorca* is a healthful Place; — the Troops might there have remained with Pleasure; and at the same time that they served to secure the *Island*, they would have served to furnish our *Admiral* with what *Troops* he thought necessary for executing any Design.——In this case, instead of our being afraid of *Minorca*, the *Spaniards* might have had just Reason
to

to be afraid of *Majorca*, especially as we could, whenever we had a Mind, prevent any Reinforcement or Relief being sent to their Troops posted in *that Island*:——The Island of *Majorca* is an Acquisition we could not only make *but keep*, in spite of all those whose Interest it is to oppose us, if we had taken care to secure that Alliance upon the Continent, which is the *only proper* one for this Nation. I mean that which we *neglected* in the Year 1733, and therefore those who were the Cause of *that Neglect* can never, in my Opinion, sufficiently atone for it.——By a close and well concerted Alliance with *Germany, Poland, and Muscovy*, and some of the other Powers of *Europe* that might have been easily brought in to the Confederacy, we might have set up a *new Power in Europe*, that would have *shared* with *France* the Coasts upon the Continent, *which are opposite to this Island*, and we might have diminished the Power of *Spain* by increasing that of *Portugal* as well as our own. But this was a Design that could not be *expected from, or conceived by* those, who never thought of any thing beyond an *annual Expedient*.

I hope, it is not yet too late to *do well*; and if some Stories be true, which I have heard whispered, since I sat down to write this Reply, I shall expect to see a *Change of Men*, and with that a *Change of Measures*.——I hope, we shall no longer continue to mix *Peace with War*, or neglect attacking an *impotent Enemy*, for fear they should attack us.——I hope, I shall hear no more of the Danger we may expose ourselves to, by *prosecuting the War* in that Method which alone is proper for compelling *Spain* to submit to reasonable Terms, or by *taking and holding* such Places in the *West-Indies* as are *necessary* for securing the *Freedom*

dom of our *Trade and Navigation* in the *American Seas*.—It is with great Joy, I expect to see *wise Measures* resolved on and *vigorously* pursued ; for it is always with the utmost Regret and Concern, that I find fault with any one Step in the Conduct of our Publick Affairs.—I shall never do so, *at least in a publick manner*, but when I think, that the Honour and Safety of my Country render it *absolutely necessary* ; and I shall always endeavour to do it in so decent a manner, that *even those who may think themselves particularly blamed*, shall have *no just Cause* to be offended with what I say.

F I N I S.



